

Prevarication and fantasy: that's the Tory way

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The ineptitude of our government never ceases to amaze me. The last day or so has provided two further examples.

First, there is the fiasco on housing asylum seekers. The solution to this problem is glaringly obvious. The government needs to recruit, train and retain enough people to handle claims for asylum in a decent time interval. The aim should be for 90% to be dealt with within six months. Instead, less than 10% are. If this goal was achieved we would:

- * Create employment.
- * Deal with a social problem.
- * Do justice by asylum seekers.
- * Get many of those asylum seekers to work in our economy where they could contribute to society.
- * Save cost.
- * Reduce social tension.

It's really not hard to work this out. But instead, we get proposals to put 10% (at most) of asylum seekers on ships, where the fire risk is horrendous and the cost very high, or in army camps, where sewage systems will not be up to the job as they were never designed for this density of population.

Why can't the obvious, and cost-effective, thing be done? Because it does not suit the Tory agenda to do it. Concentration camps detention centres suit that agenda instead.

Then there is climate change. We are ten years behind on targets according to the government's own Climate Change Committee, which says all discussion of further carbon-based energy is wrong (which is glaringly obviously true). So, what do we get? A softening of targets and reliance on the wholly unproven technology in carbon capture and storage which most think will never work, but which lets the big emitters carry on

polluting now as if we have no reason for concern, when our whole future is on the line.

Why can't we get this right? Because big money lobbying and funding from big oil for the likes of the Institute of Economic Affairs (whose funding is not disclosed, so I am allowed to speculate on where it comes from) prevents that happening, and the IEA get peerage nominations for suggesting we should not worry. That's why we cannot get this right.

There is no doubt that we need to act on asylum seekers: the issue is not going away.

There is also no doubt that we must act on climate change: that issue is here, for good.

But for the Tories, prevarication and fantasy technology are the preferred options.

When will we get serious politicians?